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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 H-01 EB-08 /038 W
----------129659 070908Z /12
P 070841Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1023
USICA WASHDC PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: ELAB, OEXC, JA
SUBJECT: FY 78 LEP: SOHYO HEADQUARTERS TEAM: BACKGROUND
- AND PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS

REF: TOKYO 15773

1. BACKGROUND: SOHYO HEADQUARTERS TEAM SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH DELEGATION LED BY SOHYO PRESIDENT MAKIEDA WHICH WILL ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK LATER FOR TALKS WITH AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY. WHILE TEAM IS EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING CLOSER TIES WITH AMERICAN UNIONS AND IS OF SUFFICIENTLY HIGH LEVEL TO DISCUSS SOHYO POLICIES, IT HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOLDING IN DEPTH TALKS ON BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND DOES NOT WANT TO UPSTAGE MAKIEDA.

2. EVEN THOUGH ONLY ONE MEMBER (FINANCE BUREAU DIRECTOR TSUTSUI) ACTUALLY BELONGS TO SOHYO HEAD-QUARTERS, GROUP IS KNOWN AS HEADQUARTERS TEAM BECAUSE IT WAS RECRUITED PERSONALLY BY INTERNATIONAL BUREAU DIRECTOR DOKI AND APPROVED BY PRESIDENT MAKIEDA. THIS REPRESENTS FIRST TIME IN OVER 10 YEARS THAT SOHYO HEADQUARTERS HAS ACTIVELY COOPERATED IN SELECTION
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OF PARTICIPANTS FOR LEP. MAKIEDA AND DOKI CAREFULLY CHOSE HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS OF SOHYO MEMBER UNIONS WHO THEY BELIEVED WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO AFL-CIO. ALL PARTICIPANTS BELONG TO SOCIALIST PARTY, NONE HAVE NOW OR EVER HAD COMMUNIST PARTY CONNECTIONS AND ALL COME FROM UNIONS WHICH HAVE ALREADY DEVELOPED OR ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING CLOSER TIES WITH AMERICAN

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COUNTERPARTS.

3. PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT WAS SELECTION OF JAPAN EXPRESS WORKERS (ZEN NITTSU) PRESIDENT NAKAGAWA AS TEAM LEADER. WHEN WIDE OPEN RACE FOR SOHYO PRESIDENCY DEVELOPED JUST PRIOR TO 1976 CONVENTION, NAKAGAWA WAS INITIALLY THE FRONT RUNNER. HE WITHDREW FROM RACE AT LAST MINUTE AND PLAYED BEHIND THE SCENES ROLE IN SECURING UNANIMOUS APPROVAL OF MAKIEDA, SOHYO'S FIRST EVER PRESIDENT COMING FROM PUBLIC SECTOR UNION. NAKAGAWA WAS THEN CHOSEN AS ONE OF SOHYO'S VICE PRESIDENTS. RUMOR HAS IT THAT NAKAGAWA DECLINED TO RUN FOR PRESIDENCY BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM JAPAN EXPRESS MANAGEMENT WHICH FEARED THAT IF HE TOOK THE TOP JOB IN SOHYO, POLITICALLY MODERATE NAKAGAWA WOULD BE PUSHED TOO FAR TO THE LEFT AND THEREBY WOULD SOMEHOW TARNISH COMPANY'S IMAGE. NAKAGAWA IS STILL A POTENT FORCE IN JAPANESE LABOR CIRCLES. IF JAPAN EXPRESS COMPANY SHOULD ACCEPT AS GENUINE SOHYO'S RECENT ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP A MODERATE IMAGE, HE MIGHT WELL BE IN POSITION TO RUN FOR SOHYO PRESIDENCY WHEN MAKIEDA STEPS DOWN IN A FEW YEARS. A MORE REALISTIC POSSIBILITY IS THAT HE WILL RUN FOR DIET ON JSP TICKET IN A FUTURE UPPER HOUSE ELECTION.

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4. PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS: SINCE, AS MENTIONED ABOVE, ALL MEMBERS OF TEAM ARE VISITING U.S. FOR THE FIRST TIME AND THEIR STAY IS RELATIVELY LIMITED, THEY WISH ABOVE ALL TO GAIN GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF ROLE OF LABOR UNIONS IN U.S. SOCIETY AND VIEWS OF U.S. UNIONS ON CURRENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. THEY ARE INTERESTED IN MEETINGS WITH AFL-CIO DEPARTMENT HEADS, APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AT STATE AND LABOR (WE HOPE THAT DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY SAMUEL AT LABOR, AND EA/J OFFICE DIRECTOR ROMBERG AT STATE CAN MEET WITH THEM), AS WELL AS MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES FOCUSING ON LABOR AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON. IN ADDITION, RECOMMEND VISITS TO GEORGE MEANY LABOR COLLEGE AND AAFLI. GIVEN THEIR ACTIVE ROLE IN SOCIALIST PARTY, THEY ARE INTERESTED IN ATTITUDES OF AMERICAN POLITICIANS TOWARDS U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS AND CONGRESSIONAL TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. WE SUGGEST APPOINTMENTS WITH STAFF OF SENATE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE (POSSIBLY ROY WERNER AT LATTER), AS WELL AS CALL ON SENATOR OR CONGRESSMAN WHO ENJOYS STRONG LABOR SUPPORT. IF TIME PERMITS, PERHAPS RAY GODSON AT GEORGETOWN

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UNIVERSITY COULD ARRANGE FOR TEAM TO MEET STUDENTS INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL LABOR AFFAIRS AND/OR MAJORING IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE STUDIES.

5. GROUP'S SECOND MAJOR AREA OF INTEREST IS PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONISM. BECAUSE OF CURRENT SOHYO EFFORTS TO SECURE RIGHT TO STRIKE FOR PUBLIC CORPORATION EMPLOYEES AND RIGHT TO ORGANIZE FOR FIREMEN, THEY WISH TO BE BRIEFED ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS AREA IN U.S. THEY HAVE ASKED SPECIFICALLY FOR A MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF AFL-CIO'S PUBLIC EMPLOYEES DEPARTMENT. AS THREE OF THE TEAM'S

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NSAE-00 PA-01 H-01 EB-08 /038 W
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P 070841Z SEP 78
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MEMBERS REPRESENT TRANSPORT UNIONS, TEAM IS EAGER TO MEET WITH BRAC VICE PRESIDENT OTERO AND OTHER OFFICIALS OF TRANSPORT UNION COUNTERPARTS.

6. SINCE NEW YORK VISIT IS VERY SHORT, WE SUGGEST, IN ADDITION TO TOUR OF UN AND (IF HE HAS TIME) A MEETING WITH FORMER EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND PRESENT USUN COUNSELOR RICHARD PETREE, VISIT TO TEAMSTERS DISTRICT OFFICE (IF FEASIBLE) AND MEETING WITH AFSCME DISTRICT 37 PRESIDENT GOTTBAUM. AS MENTIONED REFTEL, GROUP INTERESTED IN TRAVELING BY AMTRACK FROM WASHINGTON TO NEW YORK.

7. IN LOS ANGELES, WE SUGGEST, IN ADDITION TO APPROPRIATE UNION VISITS, MEETING WITH FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN JAMES HODGSON AND FORBES MAGAZINE ASIA EDITOR (FORMER WALL STREET JOURNAL TOKYO CORRESPONDENT) NORMAN PEARLSTEIN.

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8. SPECIAL PROBLEMS: NAKAGAWA REPRESENTS UNION WHICH ORGANIZES COMPANY ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO OLD RAILWAY EXPRESS. ZEN NITTSU HAS ASSUMED THAT ITS U.S. COUNTERPART UNION IS TEAMSTERS AND, IN PAST, HAS OCCASIONALLY HAD CONTACTS WITH VISITING TEAM-
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STERS REPRESENTATIVES. IN VIEW OF SNOWBALLING TREND AMONG SOHYO CONSTITUENT UNIONS TO EXPAND CONTACTS WITH AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS, NAKAGAWA IS UNDER SOME COMPULSION TO RETURN FROM U.S. WITH EVIDENCE THAT HE TOO HAS DONE SO. FULLY AWARE OF CURRENT AFL-CIO ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TEAMSTERS NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, HE DOES NOT WANT TO APPROACH TEAMSTERS IN WASHINGTON FOR FEAR THAT IT WOULD SOMEHOW HAVE ADVERSE EFFECT ON SOHYO-AFL-CIO RELATIONSHIP. NAKAGAWA HOPES, HOWEVER, THAT HE CAN MEET WITH ANY LOCAL TEAMSTER LEADERS, EITHER IN NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES OR SAN FRANCISCO, WHO HAVE GOOD WORKING RELATIONS WITH STATE OR MUNICIPAL AFL-CIO COUNCILS. IN ANY CASE, HE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FROM EITHER DOL PROGRAM OFFICER OR AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL DEPT. FRANK EXPOSITION OF THEIR POSITION ON CONTACTS WITH TEAMSTERS.

9. TEAM IS VERY ANXIOUS TO EXPERIENCE ONE EXAMPLE OF AMERICAN "HOME HOSPITALITY" EVEN THOUGH IT WILL BE VISITING ONLY LARGE CITIES WHERE SUCH INVITATIONS ARE HARD TO COME BY. WE HOPE THAT IN VIEW OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE OF THIS GROUP ONE SUCH INVITATION CAN BE OBTAINED.

10. WE SUGGEST THAT ABOVE BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR ERNIE LEE. MANSFIELD

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